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T U E S D A Y H I G H L I G H T S

- + Secretary-General, in letter to Security Council, calls attention to difficulties facing UNPROFOR; says initiative by Contact Group could have serious implications for United Nations involvement in former Yugoslavia.
- + WFP plans food distribution network in Rwanda to encourage refugees to return home; seeks \$76 million to feed 1.7 million refugees in Zaire for three months.
- + Secretary-General says Security Council should remain ready to increase strength of UNAVEM II, despite lack of progress in Angola peace talks.
- + Secretary-General welcomes signing of Washington Declaration by Jordan and Israel; hopes breakthrough will accelerate Middle East peace process.
- + Special Rapporteur on human rights in former Yugoslavia calls on Bosnian Serb authorities to permit medical evacuations from Gorazde.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has written to the Security Council President calling attention to the difficulties facing the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), whose responsibilities could be assumed by an international task force, according to Special Adviser Alvaro de Soto. He noted that the Force was deployed in isolated groups, was vulnerable, and depended on the cooperation of the parties on the ground.

Mr. de Soto pointed out that acceptance of the recent initiative by the Contact Group on the former Yugoslavia -- France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States -- would have serious implications for United Nations involvement in the region. The Secretary-General had thus decided to present a "refresher" on his thinking on the subject, before the Foreign Ministers of the Contact Group met later this month. He had not formulated any objection to the initiative, but felt that the Group should tackle the issue of implementation should its proposals be

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accepted. Nor had the Secretary-General recommended that the United Nations withdraw from the former Yugoslavia. He had, however, called attention to the incompatibility between the Force's responsibilities and the situation there.

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The World Food Programme (WFP) today said it was mobilizing and delivering food needed by Rwandan refugees in Zaire, and increasing efforts to distribute food inside Rwanda to encourage refugees to return home. The WFP plans to set up a base to store food in Gisenyi, Rwanda, and will set up distribution points for the refugees, in addition to its regular programme inside the country.

"We hope that when the refugees in Goma see that WFP is moving food through Rwanda and know that food is available inside the country, they will have the confidence to return home," said WFP Executive Director Catherine Bertini. "The best way to end this almost apocalyptic crisis is for people to go back to Rwanda."

The WFP has appealed for \$76 million to cover the costs of 82,000 metric tonnes of food and related transportation costs for the 1.7 million refugees in Zaire for the next three months. To date, \$23 million has been received. Meanwhile, the Programme has been procuring trucks to deliver the 600 metric tonnes of food needed each day in Goma.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has recommended that the Security Council remain ready to increase the strength of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM II) in the event of a breakthrough in the Lusaka peace talks. However, in a report dated 22 July, he said that progress in the talks had been limited despite intensive diplomatic efforts, and that it was difficult to be optimistic about the prospects for success. While the Angolan Government and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) had agreed on the specific principles relating to national reconciliation, there had been no agreement on the modalities for their implementation.

Government and UNITA forces were currently engaged in stalemated battles in south-western and central Angola after fighting intensified last month, the Secretary-General noted. As a result, humanitarian deliveries had been suspended or reduced, and the situation was particularly precarious in the city of Kuito. The Security Council should press the parties to stop fighting immediately, to guarantee deliveries of humanitarian supplies, and to ensure the safety of relief workers.

The Secretary-General expressed hope that recent diplomatic initiatives, including that of South African President Nelson Mandela, would boost the peace process. If the Government and UNITA reached a comprehensive agreement, he would send an advance team to Angola to prepare further recommendations for the Council.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has warmly welcomed the signing yesterday of the Washington Declaration between Jordan and Israel, according to a United Nations spokesman. He applauded the statesmanship shown by King Hussein and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, which had led to the signing ceremony at the White House. The Secretary-General said he was very encouraged by the Declaration, and expressed the hope that it would accelerate the process of achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

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The Special Rapporteur on human rights in the former Yugoslavia has called on the Bosnian Serb authorities to permit the evacuation of seriously ill people in Gorazde. In the last six weeks, the authorities have refused to allow the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) to conduct any medical evacuations from the pocket. As a result, 35 patients have been unable to receive vital medical attention. One has already died and others are rapidly deteriorating. Another 78 patients, whose cases are less urgent, are also awaiting evacuation.

The Special Rapporteur noted that the Bosnian Serb authorities were also preventing badly needed medical specialists from entering Gorazde. Calling attention to the fundamental human rights issues involved and to the life-threatening situation, he insisted that they reverse their position immediately.

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